



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

COMMUNIQUE

Committee and Board meetings 16 April-21 May 2020

Cattle producers from around the country met online for the Cattle Council of Australia's (CCA) committee meetings in April and May 2020 followed by a meeting of the CCA Board from 20-21 May. Key policies were progressed on integrity systems, industry structure, pain management, breeder cattle programs, the proposed Animal Wellbeing CRC, animal health, welfare and biosecurity, and research and development. In summary:

- CCA is progressing an awareness and adoption strategy designed to increase the sector's knowledge and use of pain-relief compounds when conducting certain surgical procedures as part of routine cattle management. This strategy is being designed for lay operators to raise awareness around pain-relief compound costs, availability, benefits and withholding periods.
- CCA committed to pursuing adoption of the Animal Welfare Standards for Cattle by state and territory governments. Despite Agricultural Ministers agreeing to the national Standards and Guidelines in 2016, only South Australia and NSW have formally recognised the document.
- CCA continues to support the Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines; however, given the long period since the document was written, CCA supported it being reviewed once the Standards are adopted by all jurisdictions.
- CCA noted the onset of coronavirus had slowed discussion around a restructure of the red meat industry; however, CCA continued to progress conversations about how it could be restructured internally and within the broader red meat sector to benefit levy payers.
- The Board noted CCA will provide input into the review of the NLIS Device Standards. CCA recognises NLIS devices are not yet a suitable replacement for branding as they can be removed. Industry needs an assurance NLIS tags would be secure and reliable for the lifetime of an animal before it can be used as an alternative to branding.
- CCA established a Cattle Breeder Program policy for live breeding cattle being exported which are not covered by the ESCAS system, to guide governments in mitigating risks. CCA recognise these programs are important to food security and promoting overall growth in beef consumption in receiving countries.
- The committees and board discussed the proposed development of a Livestock Wellbeing Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) 1. It was noted that if supported, the CRC needs to adequately represent red meat producers at a strategic level including ensuring projects consider industry risks, financial contributions from the grass-fed beef sector go to projects with direct relevance to its producers and the red meat industry retains control of the Intellectual Property developed using their levies.
- CCA has established a working group to further develop CCA EU trade policy positions.

CCA's Board and committees are due to next meet from August 10-14, 2020.

¹ Corporate Research Centre (CRC) program are an Australian Government initiative that supports Australian industries ability to compete and produce by helping industry partner with the research sector to solve industry identified issues.

Summary of outcomes

Marketing, Market Access and Trade Committee (MMAT)

Breeder Program policy - Agreed: The Board accepted the committee's recommendation to establish a new Cattle Breeder Program policy which urges the Federal Government to ensure breeder cattle in programs going to new markets outside of ESCAS are fit for purpose and adapted to the environmental conditions of receiving countries. The policy promotes a comprehensive risk assessment of the proposed program, independent monitoring of animal welfare and monitoring and an agreed process for intervention if required.

Indonesian breeder tender - Noted: CCA continues to work with ALEC to encourage the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to engage with the Indonesian government on animal welfare protocols.

EU FTA - Noted: The committee will form a working group to develop EU trade policy further ahead of the August committee and board meetings.

The Animal Health, Welfare and Biosecurity (AHW&B)

Draft Pain Management policy - Noted: "Surgical procedures" need to be defined and the option for CCA to support mandating pain relief for all procedures should be acknowledged for future consideration.

Proposed Animal Wellbeing CRC - Noted: Principles of the proposed Animal Wellbeing CRC. Agreed: AHW&B supports commencement in FY2021-22, pending further details around possible investment partners and funding arrangements involving grass-fed cattle levies.

Industry Systems and Food Safety Committee (ISFS)

Pain Management - Noted: Barriers to greater pain relief use during surgical procedures include awareness, cost and lack of technology. Producers should be provided more information on available products and pain relief should be at the discretion of individual producers. Increased availability of pain relief products will reduce costs and increase adoption. Pain Relief R&D should also be increased. Agreed: CCA develop a strategy for the increased use of pain management that considers the above points.

NLIS Standards Review - Noted: CCA is providing input into the draft standards prior to the standards being released for public comment. The committee believes the priority should be ensuring a single tag can trace an animal for its lifetime.

Environment and Sustainability Committee (ENVR)

Climate Change - Noted: The committee plans to facilitate a webinar on Global Warming Potential, an alternative method for accounting for methane emissions. Noted: Committee is developing an engagement plan with the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef to ensure Australian perspectives are recognised especially in the goal setting process.

The Australian Farm Biodiversity Certification Scheme Trial - Noted: Committee members are actively engaged with the Federal Government through the National Farmers' Federation to ensure the grass-fed beef industry's voice is heard.

Research, Development and Adoption Committee (RD&A)

Livestock Wellbeing CRC Proposal - Agreed: If the Livestock Wellbeing CRC is to be supported by the grass-fed sector it must adequately represent the red meat industry at a strategic level. Project decisions should consider future industry risks, grass-fed beef financial contributions should go to practical applications of technology with direct relevance to its producers and the red meat industry must remain in control of any Intellectual Property the CRC develops using grassfed research dollars.

Pain Management - Agreed: Industry should run a national awareness and adoption campaign coordinated by MLA, including basic procedures such as hygiene, needle and vaccine use. Agreed: CCA will pursue the necessary RDE&A expenditure for project to lengthen the 'effectiveness period' of pain-relief compounds; improve pain-measurement, develop alternatives to surgery and assess the benefits of pain-relief use to the producer.

CN30 - Agreed: CCA to further develop CN30 policy and advocacy positions, covering advocacy for state and federal government support mechanisms to drive RD&A, new easily adopted carbon credit methods for industry and attracting public and private investment of around \$200m by 2030 to deliver the CN30 Roadmap.

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